

**Minutes of the Waterbury Selectboard Special Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 11, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.**  
**Main Street Fire Station, 43 S. Main St. and on Zoom**

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[Zoom recording here](#) | Passcode: P^qFNi9W

**Selectboard attendance:** Kane Sweeney, Mike Bard, Roger Clapp, Alyssa Johnson, Tori Taravella,  
**Staff attendance:** Dana Allen, Bill Woodruff, Cheryl Casey

**Public attendance:** ORCA Media, John Grenier, Robert Wells, Chris Viens, Pete Martel, Carrie MacMillan, Sheryl Stancliffe, Betsy Shapiro, Morgan Griffin, Valerie Rogers, Cheryl Gloor, Tom Gloor, Evan Karl Hoffman, Harry Shepard, Anne Imhoff, Alec Tuscany, Jack Crowe, Lisa Scagliotti, Katherine Mackey

**Public on Zoom:** ORCA Media, Don Schneider, Kathryn Grace, Kim Sibylle, Jeanne, Emma Cotton, Katie Clark Johnson, Mark Frier, Mike Dacey, Mal Culbertson, Amy Marshall-Carney, Sandy Sabin, Aylee

CALL TO ORDER, 7:07 p.m. by A. Johnson

**AGENDAS**

*Meeting agenda*

**Motion by T. Taravella to approve the agenda; seconded by M. Bard.**

No further discussion; **motion approved unanimously**

*Consent agenda*

**Motion by T. Taravella to approve the consent agenda; seconded by K. Sweeney.**

No further discussion; **motion approved unanimously.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

M. Bard announced that the Rotary is having Pie for Breakfast at the Legion this Saturday.

T. Taravella added that the Rotary's silent auction will debut at the breakfast.

K. Grace asked for clarity on what will happen to K. Sweeney's seat and how it will be filled.

- A. Johnson said he hasn't resigned yet but has stated his intentions to resign after Town Meeting Day. There are procedures set by the state for filling a vacant selectboard seat.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

R. Clapp facilitated the informational portion of the meeting about development on the Stanley Wasson site.

- He began by announcing that Downstreet Housing will begin accepting lease applications for 51 S. Main Street on Feb. 16, with leases to begin June 1.

- The purpose of tonight’s meeting is to share information, to address concerns that there hasn’t been sufficient transparency. The selectboard will not be making any decisions tonight.

R. Clapp introduced the panel:

Dana Allen, Planning Commission and grants consultant

Robert Wells, DEW Properties

John Grenier, Grenier Engineering

Martha Staskus, Planning Commission

Skip Flanders, Housing Task Force

**Overview presentations and updates on Stanley Wasson property other relevant topics**

*Background on the Stanley Wasson property*

R. Clapp reviewed the origins and early history of the site where Wasson Wall and Stanley Hall once served the Vermont State Hospital, and then State Offices.

- Tropical Storm Irene destroyed the ground floor of the entire state complex, closing the State Hospital.
- The buildings were demolished by the state in 2021.
- In 2023, the state approved the sale of the parcel (2.3 acres) to the town to add housing.
- R. Clapp then reviewed the steps the town has taken to further the project and arrive at the current status of having a predevelopment draft agreement with DEW Properties.

*The state of housing in Waterbury*

S. Flanders presented on behalf of the Housing Task Force.

- The task force has spent months trying to understand the housing market in town, finding it to be complex.
- Some key conclusions:
  - To keep up with historical household growth, Waterbury needs to add ~20-30 units each year.
  - About half of renters spend more than is considered affordable on housing.
  - The median annual income fits a house priced about \$325,000; the typical house for sale in Waterbury is priced \$435,000.
  - Housing, both for buyers and renters, needs to work for more moderate- and middle-income households.

**Discussion**

P. Martel asked if 51 S. Main St. fits some of these needs and if Downstreet offers the option to purchase units.

- S. Flanders confirmed that it does offer a mix of low-, moderate-, and middle-income units, and Downstreet does have options to purchase some units, although he isn’t sure if that program is part of 51 S. Main.

K. Grace wondered how we address other factors, like AirBnB, interest rates, and construction costs. In the last two years, she has seen the number of applicants go down for her units.

M. Bard noted that low and moderate income levels are overlapping categories.

K. Grace asked if the Stanley Wasson units will be limited to only current Waterbury residents.

- R. Clapp said that hasn't been discussed yet.

C. Viens brought up a recent article about the housing and workforce crisis in Vermont due to property valuations. Property valuations are doubled but paychecks aren't moving much.

- R. Clapp noted that a market study is one of the actions DEW is asking to do so that they can price units according to what people can afford.

#### *Additional updates*

M. Staskus spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission

- In their work in developing the new Town Plan, they found that property taxes (#1), adequate housing and affordability (#2), and climate change/flood resiliency (#3) were the top three challenges identified by residents in surveys (some 400 responses).
- The goals emerging in the new housing chapter include increasing housing by 36 units per year and facilitating the availability of a variety of housing unit types for different income levels and needs.

Dana Allen [presented about the permitting context](#), specifically information related to the flood zones, the floodway, and elevations.

- He suggested that it is important to keep in mind that the location of the parcel is at the distal edge of the floodplain.
- Waterbury's Special Flood Hazard Overlay in the zoning regulations is meant to allow for building in the floodplain, but smartly and responsibly.

#### **Discussion**

V. Rogers noted that she currently doesn't live in a flood zone, but she was flooded, both in recent years and in Tropical Storm Irene.

- D. Allen acknowledged that flood modeling is very complicated and hard to predict.

P. Martel asked if there was any information yet about when FEMA would update the flood maps.

- D. Allen said he heard fall 2026, but there has been frustratingly little information that can be counted on.
- P. Martel suggested that more properties will be within the floodplain when the maps are updated.

C. Macmillan said putting a high-density development in that location is gambling with our future.

K. Mackey said this location is ridiculous, given the history of flooding in that section of town. She doesn't understand why we are pursuing this project until we learn more from the Randall Meadow project.

- D. Allen said Waterbury is one of the more aggressive communities in the state regarding flood mitigation. These are multi-year projects, and pursuing things concurrently is strategic to address how slow things move.

K. Grace said one of the locations on the presentation map marked as "little risk/minimal flooding" is where she lives, and they have had more than minimal flooding.

- The statistics don't align with the reality of the experience. She doesn't think the photos are accurately showing what really happened.
- M. Dacy said CRew is tracking updated floodmaps very closely and will be doing outreach with that information.

T. Yip said Washington County is scheduled to get their work maps available in spring 2026.

- Delays are happening, but we should get them at least this year.

- The maps probably won't be officially applicable until 2028, given the FEMA process.
- R. Wells said they would do a market study immediately.
- The results would determine the number of units and costs, looking at a range of income ranges.
  - Affordability is the goal of most of their projects, but some units at market rate will likely be offered.
  - He explained the research they would conduct on the site to understand the soils, drainage, and other factors that would weigh in on building smartly in a floodplain.
  - They are asking for 18 months due diligence with this pre-development agreement to make sure the project doesn't negatively impact the community in any way, including flood resilience.
  - The owner of DEW Properties is from Central Vermont and he feels strongly that he would do right by the community.
- J. Grenier noted he was on the selectboard during Irene and he understands the concerning factors at play.
- There are zoning regulations set by the state about building in a floodplain and there are strategies for building for resilience.
  - There are opportunities to build in a floodplain.
  - We are not allowed to build something that raises the local flood elevation. For whatever amount of fill is put in, the same amount needs to be removed.
- C. MacMillan said the parcel currently holds flood water; anything put there takes away the lot's ability to hold water. The green space helps protect the neighborhood.
- J. Grenier emphasized that the project will be designed to provide equal if not greater flood storage on that site.
- K. Grace recalled that after Irene, people said we wouldn't be building in a floodplain anymore.
- Ninety units held up by pillars, sitting on top of parked cars on the ground level, doesn't sound like a given for flood storage and protection. \
  - She doesn't think it is good practice to put more of anything in a floodplain.
- J. Grenier acknowledged there is a lot to figure out. Municipal sewer and water is a significant asset if we are going to add a lot of units.
- The building hasn't been designed yet, and the civil engineer and architect typically work very closely, consulting with police and fire officials on issues of safety and others whose expertise should inform the design process.
- C. Viens asked how many inches of rain would pose a danger.
- D. Allen replied that the amount of rain and a river's response aren't directly correlated, so it is hard to say how much rain would start causing damage.
  - C Viens added that the ratio of greenspace to impervious area is tilting heavily toward impervious area with this project and we should be looking at the Randall Meadow designs and statistics first. We don't have anywhere we can put retention ponds.
  - D. Allen noted the difference between stormwater treatment and flood management.
  - J. Grenier said any new project needs to have a stormwater discharge permit to address the runoff responsibly. The current parcel is already mostly a parking lot, an impervious area.
- C. MacMillan explained that the sewer system at the intersection of Park Row and Randall is awful, especially during heavy rains. If we add another 90 units to that system, will that entire sewer line need to be replaced? We're gambling with a lot of things.
- B. Woodruff acknowledged the Park Row sewer line is old and made of clay, and the Randall line was replaced in the last 15 years.

- There are plans to upgrade the sewer line on Park Row, but there is a question as to the best timing in relation to the proposed projects.

In response to a question about Randall Meadow, D. Allen explained that flood water reduction must be considered as a range because different conditions can affect the level of flooding.

- The archaeological work is part of the budget for the earlier stages of implementation, before design.

C. Casey noted that D. Allen's video presentation about the Randall Meadow bond vote is posted in the calendar entry for the Feb. 17th public hearing on the topic, and she is working on gathering all of this related documentation on one page.

M. Dacey said CREW has a survey on their website, [thecrewvt.org](http://thecrewvt.org), to understand sewer backup problems related to intense weather events. He also asked about the general process of the RFQ and how we got to this point of one response and an exclusive 18-month pre-development timeline.

- R. Clapp answered we were hoping for more responses. A lot of people looked at it but there frankly aren't that many developers that can take this kind of project on.
- R. Wells added that during the due diligence process, the developer starts spending money to conduct the research. Exclusivity mitigates the risk of spending money on their side. This is a common approach.

T. Taravella read a comment sent by resident Katya D'Angelo:

- During the 51 S. Main St. discussions, many asked about the Stanley Wasson site. The town heard those comments and pursued the project, only now to be met with pushback. She supports downtown development, as she loves living here and hopes others have that opportunity.

C. Viens asked about (1) the results of the impact study on 51 S. Main St. and (2) if the town will be closing on the property before decisions about moving forward are made.

- K. Sweeney said we have always had the option to extend our purchase agreement with the state so as not to pull the trigger too soon.
- R. Clapp said it isn't a foregone conclusion that the project will be feasible.
- R. Wells said if the pre-development agreement is signed, DEW would immediately begin a market study.
  - In parallel with the market study, they will do site investigation, remediation, and work with Grenier Engineering on flood resilience.
  - They will also work closely with the Randall Meadow Project team

A. Marshall-Carney asked about the decision-making process and timeline.

- B. Woodruff said they are board-level decisions.
- A. Johnson added that the project entails working the purchase of the parcel into the agreement with the developer; the town is not proposing to spend the money to purchase the site or to become a developer.
- M. Bard said the decision-making on moving forward with a single proposal wasn't ideal for anyone, selectboard and town manager alike, but there are so few companies that have the expertise to undertake a project like this. He expects all of the concerns to be addressed in the planning process, and it might turn out that the project isn't feasible.

K. Grace asked R. Wells whether a traffic study is part of the due diligence, and who is paying for the due diligence.

- R. Wells said the traffic study is part of the site investigation. The developer is on the hook for the costs of due diligence, which is why they are asking for exclusivity.

C. Gloor asked if information gathered during due diligence would not be shared with the public.

- R. Wells said internal numbers wouldn't be shared, but everything else would be at the selectboard's discretion.

R. Clapp clarified that the town isn't on the hook with the state to purchase the property until we are ready.

M. Dacey asked R. Wells if all of the units are expected to be rentals.

- R. Wells said they are thinking of some condo ownership and other ownership opportunities, perhaps through a shared equity program offered by Downstreet, but the market study would drive those decisions.
- M. Dacey further asked what the town position is on ownership vs rentals.
- T. Taravella said the position is up to the next selectboard, and probably best answered after the market study and other due diligence takes place.

P. Martel asked who would pay for the subdivision of the site.

- J. Grenier said it has already been done - paid for and surveyed by the state.
- P. Martel asked about paying for other permits, area improvements like sidewalks, and the flood elevation reduction that residents might be paying for already in Randall Meadow.
  - D. Allen said the two projects are functioning on two different scales and cannot be directly linked.

R. Wells addressed concerns about whether affordable housing is guaranteed, saying that their market study is likely to arrive at similar conclusions as the housing task force. Their approach is to build what communities actually need.

A. Tuscany said the design of the Randall Meadow project didn't take into account additional structures, so in some way, the two projects are connected.

- D. Allen acknowledged the Randall Meadow project will likely need modification, but that adjustment will be small. There are connections by virtue of proximity, but the connection will be a drop in the bucket.
- A. Tuscany suggested the overall due diligence for the Stanley Wasson proposal include consulting with the team that did the research on the Randall Meadow.
- R. Clapp added that discussions will happen with the town on a regular basis so that all priorities and decisions are kept in alignment.

J. Crowe, who lives on Randall St, asked if there is a reason to go forward with this agreement before the next selectboard can be elected and meet on the issue.

- R. Clapp said the board hasn't made this decision yet
- R. Wells said DEW is prepared to start the due diligence process as soon as the town is ready to go forward, and they will partner with whoever is on the selectboard and on staff at the town.

V. Rogers suggested there is a lot of loose language in the agreement that makes it unready for signature.

H. Shepard added that the RFQ reads more like an RFP, which would have required the town to conduct a lot of the due diligence already. Additionally, he doesn't remember the subdivision of the parcel ever coming to the development review board.

A. Marshall-Carney asked the selectboard to inform the public about a total cost of ownership that might show up in a municipal tax rate.

- R. Clapp said the upcoming budget for Town Meeting Day won't change appreciably if this predevelopment agreement goes forward.

A. Johnson reminded everyone that at the next meeting of the selectboard on Tuesday, February 17, the Randall Meadow project will be discussed in greater detail and the public is encouraged to come with questions and comments.

**Selectboard and Interim Municipal Manager updates**

R. Clapp:

- Rec Department is partnering with RW on organizing the Community Volunteer Fair for March 28.

**Review agenda items for next meeting**

Public hearing on bond vote

Update from Housing Task Force on the ADU grant program

Zoning enforcement

Grant compliance paperwork

Employee holiday alignment

Selectboard assignments for town meeting

**Motion by K. Sweeney to adjourn; seconded by T. Taravella.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT, 9:14 p.m.

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**Next meeting of the Waterbury Selectboard:**

*Regular Meeting:* Tues. February 17, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.

Includes Public Hearing for Randall Meadow bond vote

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Casey.*